

XXXIII.—*On some rare and unfigured Eggs of Palearctic Birds.* By H. E. DRESSER, F.Z.S. &c.

(Plate X.)

THE eggs represented in the accompanying Plate have all been received from Mr. N. Zarudny, and are, I believe, now figured for the first time. The field-notes respecting the species have been communicated to me by the same gentleman, at whose request I have great pleasure in publishing them.

(1) *SAXICOLA CHRYSOPYGIA* (De Filippi). Red-tailed Wheatear. (Pl. X. fig. 15.)

Of this species only the single egg now figured was sent; it was obtained by Mr. Zarudny on the 25th of May, 1892, in Transcaasia. The nest of this Wheatear is, like that of its allies, placed on the ground in stony places, and usually on mountain-sides, at varying altitudes, from the base of the hills to a considerable height. The eggs are white, with a bluish tinge, very finely dotted at the larger end with pale red. The specimen figured measures 0·77 by 0·65 inch.

(2) *LUSCINIOLA INDICA* (Jerdon). Indian Hill-Warbler. (Pl. X. figs. 14, 16.)

Of this bird I have received a clutch of three eggs, which were taken by Mr. B. R. Kareeff at Tyschkan, Djarkensky Uyest, on the 30th of May, 1899, from a nest on the southern slope of the Boro-choro Mountain. The nest was placed in a dense patch of nettles, about a foot above the ground, in a place where small bushes and high grass were intermingled, and where junipers were growing on the cliffs, at an altitude of about 6500 feet.

The measurements of the nest (text-fig. 12, p. 405) are as follows:—

	mm.	in.
From front to back.....	115	(4·52)
From right to left.....	135	(5·31)
Smallest diameter.....	70	(2·75)
Height of entrance-hole.....	45	(1·77)
Width of entrance-hole.....	48	(1·89)

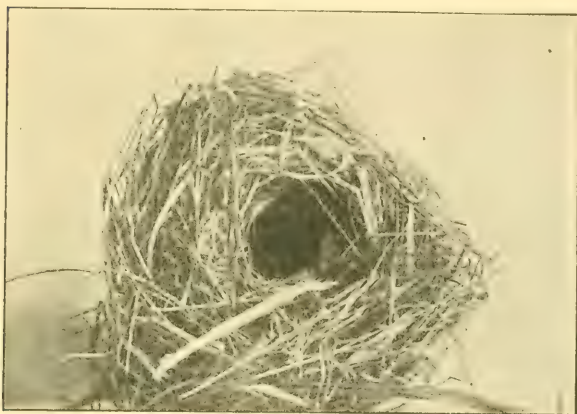
The outer wall of the nest is composed of grass bents and



André & Steigh 133

blades, the central and inner portions of similar, but finer materials, and the lining throughout of soft downy feathers, the entire fabric being firmly and closely constructed. The

Text-fig. 12.



Nest of *Luscinola indica*.

female was taken on the nest and the eggs were therefore thoroughly authenticated. Two of the eggs are figured, the third having been unfortunately broken in its transit from Russia.

(3) *PASSER YATHI* Sharpe. Afghan Sparrow. (Pl. X. figs. 1-4.)

Mr. Zarudny met with this Sparrow breeding in South-eastern Persia, and was the first naturalist to obtain its eggs, of which he has sent me several clutches. The eggs of this species are from four to six in number, and vary from stone-grey to grey in ground-colour, more or less marked and spotted with warm brown. In almost every clutch one egg has the ground-colour white, and is but sparingly marked with brown (see fig. 2). Four eggs are figured in order to show the variations: all of them were taken by Mr. Zarudny in Seistan, in the first and second weeks of June 1901.

(4) *PASSER AMMODENDRI*, Severtzoff. Saxaul Sparrow. (Pl. X. figs. 5-8.)

Four eggs of this bird were taken by Mr. Zarudny at Tedjeur, Transcaspia, on the 17th of May, 1892, and at Repetek, Transcaspia, on the 4th of May, 1892. The nest of this Sparrow resembles that of *Passer domesticus*, being sometimes open and at other times with an entrance at the side. It is constructed of saxaul twigs, and lined with camel's hair and feathers. It is usually placed in a saxaul tree, and not unfrequently in the outer portion of the nest of a Kite or other bird-of-prey. This Sparrow also builds occasionally in a ruined hut or even in the side of a well, or in a fissure on the steep slope of a sand-hill. In some clutches one egg is much paler than the rest (see fig. 7), but it appears that this is not so often the case as it is with *Passer yatii*. The eggs received from Mr. Zarudny average 0.75 by 0.57 inch in dimensions.

(5) *ANTHUS SIMILIS* (Jerdon). Brown Rock - Pipit. (Pl. X. figs. 12, 13.)

A clutch of four eggs, two of which are figured, is in the collection—but in a very dilapidated state, having been much incubated when taken by Mr. Zarudny, at Noukabad, in Baluchistan, on the 2nd of May, 1901. The nest of this Pipit is roughly constructed of grass, and is placed on the ground amongst herbage or under a bush. The eggs vary in size from 0.82 by 0.62 to 0.87 by 0.65 inch.

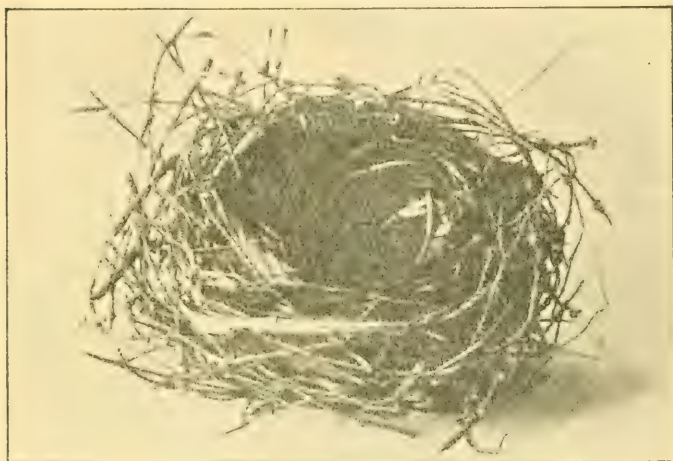
(6) *PYCNORHAMPHUS CARNEIPES* (Hodgson). White-winged Grosbeak. (Pl. X. figs. 9-11.)

A clutch of four eggs of this bird was taken in the same locality as the eggs of *Luscinola indica* on the 20th of May, 1899. The nest (see text-fig. 13, p. 407) was placed on the small lower branch of a juniper-tree, close to the stem and about five feet above the ground. The measurements of the nest are as follows:—

	mm.	in.
Extreme outer diameter.....	150	(5.90)
Diameter of cup	85	(3.34)
Depth of cup	50	(1.97)
Height of nest.....	75	(2.95)

The outside wall of the nest is of dry and fragile juniper-twigs, some of which are covered with green moss, and the inner part is of finer twigs, strongly and closely interwoven. The female alone builds the nest, but the male

Text-fig. 13.

Nest of *Pycnorhamphus carneipes*.

bird remains in the immediate vicinity while she is thus employed.

As will be seen from the figures, the eggs of this bird resemble in character those of *Coccothraustes vulgaris*.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE X.

- Figs. 1- 4. Eggs of *Passer yatuü*, p. 405.
 „ 5- 8. „ — *ammodendri*, p. 406.
 „ 9-11. „ *Pycnorhamphus carneipes*, p. 406.
 „ 12, 13. „ *Anthus similis*, p. 406.
 „ 14, 16. „ *Lausiniola indica*, p. 404.
 „ 15. Egg of *Saxicola chrysopygia*, p. 404.